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ERNST PAUER'S
THREE
HISTORICAL PERFORMANCES
OF
PIANOFORTE MUSIC,
IN STRICTLY CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER.

Third Performance.

LONDON :
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CHROMATIC FANTASIA AND FUGUE, IN D MINOR,

Sebastian Bach.

(1685—1750.)

—o—

WE possess tolerably detailed information about Bach's style of playing ; and the following is a compilation of the most essential points. Bach was undoubtedly the greatest performer of his time. The chief feature of his playing is said to have been the highest degree of distinctness in the tones produced from the keys. It is further related that Bach held his fingers bent in such a manner over the key-board that the finger tips appeared in a downward, vertical line : each finger at every moment ready for action. In taking a finger off the key-board, he drew it gently inwards with a sort of movement very like taking up coin from a table. Only the end joint was moved ; all the rest of the hand remained still. Each finger was equally well-trained. The tranquil grandeur and the dignity of Bach's playing were eminently remarkable. Bach took quick times, and rendered his performance so intelligible and interesting that it sounded like speech. Passionate passages he never expressed by violent or spasmodic movements, but solely relied on the power the composition itself possessed. Bach's improvisations are said to have been in the manner of the celebrated "Chromatic Fantasia," and sometimes even surpassed that remarkable work in brilliancy and fire. His favorite instrument was the *Clavichord* ; he often said that he found no soul in the Clavecin, and that the Pianoforte (then newly invented) was too clumsy and harsh to please him. On the Clavichord he could give all the expression he desired ; and he declared it to be the fittest instrument

for private use and for practice. We may just mention that the Clavichord had wire-strings, which were struck and pressed by the tangent (a kind of metal fork); while the Clavecin, which had also wire-strings, was sounded or rather twanged by quill plectras or tongues. The Clavichord, it is true, had but a feeble tone; still most excellent effects could be produced from it. The "staccato" passages could be rendered with the greatest distinctness; and by pressing down the key after it had been struck, the tangent could be made to still further raise the string,—and thus by slightly sharpening the pitch of the note, a greater prominence was given to the melody. Thus we see that old Bach enjoyed on his feeble instrument an advantage of which our present gigantic Grand Piano cannot boast.

It is not desirable to play Bach's pieces as fast as, for instance, those of Scarlatti; they contain so much matter of interest, that half of the beautiful composition is lost to the ear, if the piece is hurried through. A certain tenderness and grace ought to be diffused through the performance; indeed we may safely say, that an advantage is gained, if the wonderful Sarabandas are rendered with real and warm feeling. The chief requisite for doing justice to Bach is, however, a clearness which reminds us of the finest and purest polished crystal; not a spot ought to be detected, and at the same time a moderately quick animation should be always tempered by a certain quiet, yet wholly unobtrusive dignity. In almost all the older music for the Clavecin may be observed, that the scales are very often dividid between the two hands; where this is the case, it is especially necessary to obtain the greatest possible smoothness, and to blend or amalgamate the notes in such a manner that the scale seems to be performed by a single hand only. Indeed all the runs and arpeggios in Bach's Suites or Preludes require a neat, somewhat moderated

tone ; the greatest distinctness, which must however not sound like measured and regular clock-work. The study of Bach is in musical training what the study of the Greek and Roman classics is in a learned education. This great writer is indispensable,—if our musical studies are not rooted on Bach, the growth of the plant will never reach its highest development.

The name “Bach” is so intimately connected and so entirely identified with all that concerns Fugues, that it is but natural to introduce here some remarks concerning this most distinguished musical form. In Bach’s celebrated work “the well-tuned Clavecin” the Fugues are most frequently in two, three, and four parts ; the five-part Fugues are exceptional. The great way, the chief requisite for playing Fugues in a good and musician-like style, is decidedly the power of giving through the whole piece sufficient prominence and accent to the principal subject ; whenever and wherever the chief theme comes in, it ought to be played in such a distinct manner that it is at once recognized by the hearer ; and here is the opportunity for the display of good taste and of right and sound feeling. In Fugues, where the principal subject recurs frequently, the performer has to show wise discrimination in giving a continual change of colouring to each repetition of the subject, without however sacrificing the very important point of distinctness. In a Fugue which is written by a true master, we observe that phrases are introduced, which, although written or conceived in the same character as the chief subject—do not in all points resemble it. These phrases are technically called “episodes ;” they serve as a kind of relief—not only to the hearer, but also to the composer, who is through them enabled to take up the thread with renewed vigour and effect. For these episodes a completely different manner of expression is necessary ; they ought to be played

with a different kind of touch, so that they may appear in the background or foreground, according to the various requirements. The performance of a fugue may be aptly compared to the delivery of an oration. The orator gives out his theme and expatiates upon it in its various aspects, treating it from different points of view. He presents his subject from all sides. Passages will occur in his speech, which he finds it requisite to utter in a subdued voice. Interpolated phrases in the manner of parentheses, enunciated in a manner perhaps in striking contrast with that of the general oration, will sometimes derive their force and effect from that very contrast; and when in his peroration he returns to his first subject, the renewal of the tones, gestures and emphasis with which that subject was introduced will re-awaken the attention and interest of the hearers, and bring the apparently unpremeditated, but really artfully and logically constructed oration to a triumphant close. On the same principles ought a Fugue to be played. By its exactitude, order, quietude, by its uninterrupted flow of harmony—it ought to impress the hearer with a feeling of completeness and satisfaction. If mastery of the instrument is required for any kind of artistic performance, it is certainly indispensable for the effectual rendering of a Fugue; any sort of stammering, hurrying, dragging, is here fatal. Mozart warned his sister not to play Fugues too fast, “as,” he says, “distinctness is sacrificed and the hearer may not be able to follow attentively and clearly the design of the composition.”

SONATA IN A MAJOR, ... *Emanuel Bach.*
(1719—1788.)

ALLEGRO ASSAI—POCO ADAGIO—ALLEGRO.

—o—

EMANUEL BACH was educated by his father with all possible care ; and that worthy old man looked with pardonable pride at his well-instructed, accomplished, high-principled, and, at the same time, amiable son. Emanuel Bach appears a perfect gentleman : well read, an excellent linguist, polished in manners, and thoroughly honourable, generally respected and sincerely admired by men like Haydn, Clementi, and Mozart. When Emanuel Bach declared that the Germans were particularly adapted for uniting the neatness and brilliancy of French taste, with the pleasing and insinuating qualities of the Italian cantabile, he gave a correct picture of his own compositions. Amongst the German composers Emanuel Bach is almost the first who really recognized the charm of the voice, and who felt that it has capabilities entirely surpassing those of any instrument ; a soul of its own, which must be studied to be properly understood. He remarked that “a composer ought to hear good singers frequently, as in hearing them he learns to *think* songs,” and, “every composer ought to sing over his ideas to himself before he accepts them for further working out.” This remark is more important than it seems ; it contains the key for the proper understanding of Emanuel Bach’s works : it explains Haydn and Mozart. Emanuel Bach had imbibed his father’s principles in the most intellectual way ; but being more a man of the world, he worked them from another point of view. He was par-

ticularly anxious to regard every object he took in hand from the most pleasing side. Yet, with all the difference between his compositions and those of his illustrious father, we find in both the same innate order, clearness, and genuineness. He was well aware of the greatness of him, whom he admired and revered; and said more than once:—"I was obliged to strike out a little path of my own, or people would never have been aware of my existence." And this "little path," unpretending as it seems, and emanating from the desire to loosen the chains which bound instrumental music to canonical and cold rules, led eventually into the greater and clearer path of our modern music on which Beethoven marched forward to perfection.

This very interesting work is the fourth Sonata of the celebrated collection, "Sechs Clavier Sonaten für Kenner and Liebhaber der Madame Zernitz geb: Deeling in Warschau, aus besonderer Hochachtung und Freundschaft gewidmet und componirt von C. Ph. E. Bach, Leipzig, 1779." When such a conscientious man as, undoubtedly, Emanuel Bach was, wished to show his special regard and friendship for a lady, he would be sure to give of his best. Of ninety-three Sonatas which he wrote, those for connoisseurs which appeared in 1779-80-83-85 and 87, are the very best. Ninety-three Sonatas is a goodly number; and in this he has only been equalled by Haydn and surpassed by Clementi, who wrote one hundred and six! The fertility of Emanuel Bach is remarkable. In the catalogue which he himself compiled of his works, we find two hundred and ten Solos for the Pianoforte, fifty-two Concertos, forty-seven Trios, twelve Sonato Duets,—not to mention his greater compositions! In summing up the value of his works, we should say that having completely appropriated the theoretical knowledge, he yet possessed neither the grandeur nor the depth of his illustrious father; more elegant than

powerful, more touching than intellectual, it is in his compositions for the Clavecin or Pianoforte he shows off his idiosyncrasy to the greatest advantage. Through them he greatly influenced Haydn, Clementi, Mozart, Cramer, and Hummel, and in this respect was the real founder of modern Pianoforte playing. He was the mediator between Sebastian Bach and Haydn. His aim was not the extraordinary rapidity and dexterity of a Domenico Scarlatti; he called this "natürliche Hexerei" (natural trickery); his chief desire was to *sing* on the instrument. At page 107, he observes, "The accompanying parts should, as much as possible, be held away from the hand that plays the cantabile, so as not to interfere with its bringing out the latter completely, and with all attainable freedom." Our advanced technical execution renders such remarks almost superfluous; still, they have an historical interest. Is it not remarkable that almost a century later, when technical execution has culminated in Liszt and Thalberg, the last named eminent player should have made these observations in his preface to "L' Art du Chant appliqué au Piano" almost *verbatim*! Emanuel Bach was of opinion that the graces, *agrementi*, *fiorituri*, *gruppetti*, ought to embellish the subject, but never conceal or overload it. The above Sonata will be found much like those of Haydn, and will make clear the great influence the elder had over the younger composer. In the first and last parts we find those little interruptions, surprises, striking contrasts from pianissimo to fortissimo, of which Papa Hadyn was so fond. The slow movement is a model for continuous cantabile; it is harmonious, interesting, and, above all, natural.

LA CONSOLATION *Dussek.*
(1761—1812).

—o—

JOHANN LUDWIG DUSSEK was born in 1761, nine years before Beethoven, in Czaslau, a small Bohemian town. Dussek began at a very early age to show his extraordinary talent; and although he had already earned well-deserved laurels in several towns, but more particularly in Amsterdam and the Hague, he nevertheless resolved to go to Hamburg to obtain Emanuel Bach's council concerning his ability and its further development. Bach received the amiable young man, then only twenty-two years old, with his well-known affability, and readily gave him not only advice but also letters of introduction to the most influential persons in Berlin. Here Dussek created a great sensation. He afterwards went to St. Petersburg, where he accepted an engagement with Prince Radziwill. In 1786 he went to Paris, and shortly afterwards to London. Here he married Madlle. Corri, and in partnership with her father, began business as a music-publisher. But this turned out a very bad speculation, and Dussek lost all his savings. Some years later he went to Magdeburg, where he made the acquaintance of the music-loving Prince Louis Ferdinand of Prussia, with whom he remained until the untimely death of that unfortunate young prince at the battle of Saalfeld. Dussek afterwards accepted an appointment in the household of Prince Talleyrand, and died in 1812. He seems to have been an amiable man, warm hearted and cultivated; but unfortunately he showed a great amount of negligence and culpable carelessness in all practical matters. The first points that strike us in Dussek's writings are grandeur

and nobility of sentiment. Besides, we are pleased with a singular euphony of the modulations, which are founded very often on the enharmonic principle. Further, we admire the full, rich and decidedly effective scoring for the instrument. But then our sense of enjoyment is sometimes disturbed by a certain undefined yearning in his music ; we are almost cloyed with a too frequent repetition of sweet, dreamy sounds, producing a feeling of satiety, followed by the desire for more invigorating effects. Moreover, a certain want of conciseness and concentration, a frequent deficiency in Dussek's greater compositions, produces the feeling of uncertainty which we experience when groping our way in the dusk. These characteristic features of Dussek are very notable, and influenced a good many composers ; they formed in fact the foundation of the sentimental school, which soon after appeared very prominently, not only in music but also in poetry. Pianoforte playing gained most by this style—it became richer and fuller, its treatment more polyphonic—in short the Piano seemed to undergo a new development.

SONATA IN C MAJOR, Op. 53. ... *Beethoven*.
(1770—1827.)

ALLEGRO CON BRIO—ADAGIO MOLTO—ALLEGRO
MODERATO—PRESTISSIMO.

—o—

THE original title of this magnificent Sonata, announced for the first time in May, 1808, is "*Grande Sonate pour le Piano-Forte, composé et dédiée à Mousieur le Comte de Waldstein, Commandeur de l'ordre Teutonique à Virnsberg et Chambellan de Sa Majesté. I. et I. R. A. par Louis van Beethoven. Oeuvre 53.*"

Ferdinand Count Waldstein, one of Beethoven's most faithful friends, was eight years older than the great composer, and himself a passionate lover of music. According to Ries, the well-known "Andante in F" was intended as a second movement of this Sonata. The remark by a friend of Beethoven's "that the Sonata was too long" annoyed him excessively. However, on reflection, he recognised the truth of the observation: published the Andante separately; and wrote the present "Introduction" to it. The last movement is said to be founded on a national melody of the Lower Rhine, which Beethoven probably intended as a token of grateful remembrance of the proofs of friendship, shown by Count Waldstein thirteen years before, to the now celebrated composer.

The name "Sonata" is derived from the Italian verb "sonare," to sound, and was originally applied to describe a piece which has to be played, not to be sung. The old Sonata, as we have it from Biber, Kuhnau, Matheson, &c., contains the germs of the modern Sonata, but not much more; it was indeed rather to be considered as a shorter

Suite, in so far as the first movement had a great analogy with the Allemande—the slower movement with the Sarabande and the last or quick movement with the Gigue. It was Emanuel Bach, who fixed the present form of the Sonata; and indeed it may be asserted that even the greatest works of this kind by Beethoven, are still founded or built on Emanuel Bach's original plan. Joseph Haydn, an enthusiastic admirer of Emanuel Bach, improved the Sonata greatly; to such an extent, that we could pass from Haydn's Sonatas direct to those of Beethoven, in so far as the latter form a direct transition without the intervention of Mozart's Sonatas as a connecting link. The modern Sonata consists mostly of three or four movements. The first movement determines its character, and the following movements have to harmonize with it, to heighten and to supplement its effect. Each movement of the Sonata may be said to form a separate whole, but each possesses an inner connection with the other movements; just as we find the different phases and periods of development of our innermost feelings connected with the principal feeling originating in a certain event. The principal or chief feeling may pass through several modifications, may appear stronger or weaker, yet will return to its first or primary state. It may also happen that very opposite feelings suddenly appear and vanish again, without leaving any trace of their presence. Such contrasts have but sparingly been exhibited by our great composers. Judging from the psychological point of view, they considered them as extravagancies or indications of a state of feeling which is decidedly not healthy. Strange to say, our most modern music relies greatly on such effects; from which we may make a judicious estimate of the value of modern music as compared with our grand old classics.

If we attempt to describe the respective characteristic

expression of the movements in most Sonatas, we shall find that the first movement, with its symmetrically planned and broadly designed form, presents the firm and solid basis on which is founded the whole subsequent formal and ideal development. The slow movement is intended to soften and to tranquillize the mind, previously excited by the first movement, where passion is the leading characteristic feature. The Menuet or Scherzo stands between these great and striking contrasts, and prepares the mind for the Finale. The Scherzo, with its quaint humour, has to reconcile us with the darker and more passionate passages ; wit and jest find here an appropriate field ; and the composer has a welcome opportunity to show that, besides feeling and passion, he possesses also humour and an intelligent fund of joviality. It is the aim of the Finale to develop to the highest point the character indicated and initiated by the first movement. Thus we find that the Sonata contains all the necessary material for a regular psychological structure ; and the production of a really good Sonata is by no means the result of mere chance or accident, but the work is founded and built up on regular logical principles. The Solo-Sonata is like a mirror reflecting the innermost ideas and feelings which move the composer's heart ; when these individual feelings, as in the works of our classic composers, are regulated and penetrated by deep study, by the observance of strict rules, which observance has by the discipline of incessant toil become wholly instinctive to the composer, a work will be produced, which is intelligible to everyone.

least a dozen times the above splendid Fantasia in C major, before he can find out all its beauties, and all the mysteries which this remarkable piece contains, are revealed to him. Schumann as a composer, was perhaps not so richly gifted with natural musical faculties as his friend and contemporary Mendelssohn; but music may be considered among the arts, as the radiant exponent of intellectual wealth. The immediate or fundamental beauties of music are certainly melody and harmony—but a melody may be constructed in a manner especially calculated to please the less educated ear; and on the other hand it may be so written, that its real and intrinsic charm is only detected by the possessor of refined musical taste. And it is in the higher kind, this sudden or subtle kind of melody, that Schumann excels. True, in some instances he might be accused of monotony, of heaviness, and of a certain gloom. But these are idiosyncracies, inseparable from his original style; just as great painters have been accused of eccentricities which taken alone, might have appeared faults. But withal, it cannot be denied that this peculiar style of Schumann has a great charm for the musician. Schumann's music is full of a tender, sincere and warm expression; his harmonies are everywhere noble, and though highly original and even sometimes startling in their combination, very pure and even natural; his defects on the other hand, consist in too frequent repetition of small phrases, too great a tendency to interweave and cross the middle voices. He seems sometimes to produce a series of Gordian knots which he does not untie.

This speciality, it might even be called mannerism, originates with Schumann in a scantiness of direct melodious inventive power. The principal strength of his music is to be found in the harmony; he remarks himself:—"It is in music just as in chess-playing. The Queen (Melody) has

the supreme power, but the decision is always given by the King (Harmony)." This weakness in inventing broad and lasting melodies, imbued with such vitality as those of Beethoven or Mozart, is however a common fault in all composers after Schubert. Schubert's successors excel in melodious phrases which, presented and handled with extraordinary ingenuity and often with exquisite taste, sound to the uninitiated like real melody; but after all, they are only substitutes for the real metal. But it may, I think be regarded as a great merit of Schumann's that he was able in his works to exhibit so many points of striking originality and undeniable beauty. He understood how to touch a chord which had not yet been sounded by preceding composers; he presents tone-pictures thoroughly unlike any we had before; and when we consider that he came after Beethoven and before Schubert, and had Mendelssohn for a contemporary, it is indeed no slight thing, that we can frankly award him the praise of having composed original and beautiful works. As has been mentioned before Schumann's music requires to be studied; its real beauties do not offer themselves so spontaneously or readily as may be the case with other compositions; but the trouble of examining, studying and investigating his compositions will not fail of its ample reward. The motto which Schumann used for the above Fantasia, Op. 17. may be taken for our guidance in this respect:

" 'Mid all the chords that vibrate through
Earth's strangely chequered dream
There runs a note whose gentle tone
Is heard aright by him alone
Who lists with care extreme."

It is sometimes an invidious task to compare two distinguished men; but it is quite natural that the two com-

posers Mendelssohn and Schumann should be associated together and compared to each other. I may here recall a very true remark a German poet made about Schiller and Goethe :

“ Schiller or Goethe, which is the greater ;
Is it not folly, to strive to say ?
Heavenly fair is the dawn—and later—
Heavenly fair shines the perfect day.”

And if we cannot exactly apply to Schumann's music the peculiarity of the dawn, we may compare it to the evening twilight ; but we have at the same time to remember that both, the bright day and the twilight, are gifts of the same bountiful Providence,—and that each has its peculiar charm and is the necessary consequence of a natural and a Divine law from above.

THREE MUSICAL SKETCHES | “*The Lake*,” “*The Millstream*,”
and “*The Fountain*,” Op. 10.
Sterndale Bennett. (1816.)

—o—

NOTHING could be written of these real gems that would not be out of place, when one of the most interesting notices (written with sincerity, and dictated by pure friendship) of Dr. Schumann’s can be quoted.

To Schumann belongs the merit of having drawn the attention of musical Germany to the rare gifts of the young Englishman. Schumann also dedicated to him his magnificent “*Etudes symphoniques*,” which have since been re-published under the title of “*Variations in C sharp minor* (Op. 13).” Schumann’s review of the *Three Musical Sketches*, which we will now give at full length, is extracted from his “*Gesammelte Schriften*,” vol. iii., p. 29.

“An opinion has often been already expressed in these pages upon the various compositions and great talent of Bennett; indeed, in a larger work, Eusebius* has more particularly mentioned these extremely refined Sketches; and no one who ever heard them played by the composer himself could withhold his cordial assent from the praise bestowed upon them.

“There can be little doubt that the personal character of a composer invests as with a charm his compositions; still the excellence and beauty of these Sketches seem to me so prominent, that I should not think highly of the musical taste of anyone who could not appreciate them—even when the grace of the composer’s delivery is wanting.

* The *non de plume* under which Schumann wrote.

Of certain things we ought not to lose a single word ; but, on the other hand, I have never wished to make Bennett out a prodigy, but simply tried to secure for him the honour due to such artistic merit as his.

“The names of the sketches are “The Lake,” “The Millstream,” and “The fountain;” and if Art were indebted to him for these alone, they would have sufficed to perpetuate his name. In delicacy and *naïveté* of representation they seem to me to surpass everything that I have met with of musical descriptive painting ; proving that poet-like, he has seized and retained some of nature’s most musical scenes. Have you ever heard in the evening music that seems to lure you to yonder shore of the lake?—ever the angry rushing torrent of sound that drives the mill-wheels till sparks seem to fly from them? Whether the Sketches were purely the result of imagination, or of a close study of nature itself, it matters little ; composers cannot generally decide this question themselves. One idea assumes one form, another differs from it. An external image often inspires many and unlooked-for thoughts : one train of musical ideas often creates another. In short, as long as melody and music last, it will be of little use to analyse whence they spring ; we shall do better if we make up our minds to enjoy them. I have forgotten to speak of “The Fountain.” To hear him play it was indeed a pleasure ; his whole soul seemed to expand in it ; the hundred harmonious bubblings and splashings—everything was perfectly realized. Schiller could not bring it more clearly before us when he said :

‘Mein Ohr umtönet Harmonieenfluss,
Der Springquell fällt mit angenehmen Rauschen,
Die Blume neigt sich zu des Westes Kuss,
Und alle Wesen seh’ ich Wonne tauschen.’

These lines were the best criticism.”

It seems hard that Sir Sterndale Bennett, so erudite, accomplished and highly gifted as he is, should to so great an extent have forgotten his numerous admirers in the pianistic world. Lately, indeed, he has given us the charming and dramatic Sonata, "Maid of Orleans." Will he not again dip his pen into the ink, and delight us with his graceful compositions as of yore? The very keys, from which his fingers have drawn such sweet sounds, should be petitioners with us that he should write again. We do not live in a time of so many good composers for the Pianoforte, that we can, without appeal, spare one of the very best. Every note that may proceed from his original, harmonious pen, will be gratefully accepted by his brother artists and the public generally.

RHAPSODIE HONGROISE *Liszt.*
(1811.)



HOWEVER opinions may diverge about Franz Liszt, he will always be regarded as a phenomenon. No other artist has ever achieved so great a success, or has fixed public attention for so long a period. The duration of his popularity is the more remarkable, as he is not a composer who has yet been able to claim great admiration for his works ; even his most ardent friends and admirers ought to admit that his effusions excite more astonishment than pleasure. No other artist, not even Meyerbeer, has received so many and such varied distinctions. His titles would fill pages, while his decorations might cause envy even in ministers of state. Having drained the cup of worldly pleasure, he has become an Abbé ; and we behold him now, like a Phoenix, rising in his new character to fresh distinctions and commanding renewed attention. It is not impossible that the Pope may create him a “ Monsignore,” and some musical Cardinals elect him one of their brethren ! Strange would it be to find in one and the same person a Cardinal and the composer of the “ Galop Chromatique.” “ Pax vobiscum,” the reverend pianist says now ; to his great honour he has brought “ peace” and solace to the poor, during his whole life, wherever he could do so. Franz Liszt and Jenny Lind are the two extraordinary artists who, when the musical history of the nineteenth century comes to be written, will stand on the lofty elevation of having been the most humane and benevolent artists of the period ! Liszt is a musical chameleon : born in Hungary, educated in Paris, where he imbibed the theories of St. Simon, fraternising

with Poles, then with German students, and thundering in their Symposia variations on "Gaudeamus igitur;" now erecting a monument to Beethoven; now writing a monograph on Chopin, or a History of Gipsy Music; singing Petrarch's sonnets on the Pianoforte; meditating over Lamartine's "Harmonies poétiques et religieuses," inventing novel Symphonies; supporting with all his influence the works and writings of Richard Wagner. Again, transcribing "Ave Marias" of Arcadelt, and "Valses" of Schubert; playing at the Vatican; writing a Coronation Mass for the King of Hungary. Could any one shine in more varied colours! There is no style, no *genre* wherein Franz Liszt has not been active; his fingers combine all that has been done from Domenico Scarlatti to his own day. He knows every Sonata, Fugue, or Concerto that has been composed; and through this knowledge has attained to the highest skill in technical execution yet thought of. In short, he is unique and interesting to the last degree. If anyone doubts his versatility, the catalogue of his works will vouch for it. His Transcriptions, in themselves are almost a History of Music! He has presented in this manner, Arcadelt, Palestrina, Scarlatti, Händel, Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Auber, Meyerbeer, Berlioz, Wagner, and Robert Franz. He has set Russian, Swedish, Italian, Spanish, Bohemian, and Hungarian Airs, and in the latter has been particularly successful. He alone can surround those popular airs with a truly national setting. In his "El Contrabandista" we almost hear the Spanish Muleteer's Castagnettes; in his Swiss airs, the ringing of the Cow-Bells, the quaint melodies of the "Ranz des Vaches;" in his Hungarian Rhapsodies, the wild yet graceful rhythms of the "Zigeuner." Having selected the Hungarian Rhapsody, No. 8, as a specimen of Liszt's treatment of National Airs, the following remarks of a

distinguished Hungarian, Musician Geo. Liechtenstein, will be an appropriate prologue to it.

“Perhaps there is no nation whose character is so vividly represented in their songs as that of the Magyar. The Hungarian proverb, ‘Mourning, the Magyar rejoices,’ is the thread which runs through all his songs. *Adagio* and *Allegro con fuoco* are continually changing places, like sorrow and joy in life. The imagination of the Hungarian gipsy changes the songs into dances, and the dances into songs ; for the Magyar often dances to his lays. With oriental fire the Magyar holds his maiden, and turns with her like a whirlwind, till his power is gone. The proud Huzar, the wild Csikos. and the disdainful Gulyás, the cultivated youth, and the earnest man, they all rush into the stormy ‘csárdás’ (dance). ‘Haron á táne!’ (the dance three times !) is the Shibboleth of the Hungarian dancer. He is not satisfied if the Gipsy-Orpheus plays but once ; ‘three times,’ he cries, and afresh the storm commences ; nor does he cease with song and dance till his breath is gone, or till the fiddler’s hand fails. Thus dances the Magyar ; but his song is of a more earnest character ; and within the region of *minor* key, his centuries of trouble, and the desire for his long-lost grandeur, are reflected. He only smiles through tears ; and mourning, he rejoices ; and every inch of the singer, or the player, is an embodied minor chord.”

WEBER.

Where harmony and melody have place,
 Exist admirers of thy noble muse ;
 Beauty, romance, fire, energy and grace,
 Earnest discourse and strains that mirth infuse,
 Resound for ever from thy tuneful lyre.

MENDELSSOHN.

Muses and Fates, but seldom found combined,
 Existing here in amity we find,—
 Near to thy cradle keeping watch they came
 Directing fondly thy precocious aim ;
 Exalted zeal soon led thee to the goal,
 Labouring with pure integrity of soul ;
 Sweet was thy tune, thy fancy warm and chaste,
 Strict wast thou to the mission thou'dst embraced ;
 Onward still striving, till how soon alas !
 Heaven called thee to its own seraphic class,—
 Never can'st thou, bright favorite, from remem-
 brance pass.

ROBERT SCHUMANN.

Rich in invention, fancy and design,—
 Originality of thought was thine ;
 Blameless thy soul, and free from guile and ire,
 Earnest thy meaning, steadfast thy desire ;
 Rigorous thy working highest art to gain,
 Tempters assailed with sordid views in vain.

Sure wast thou of acquiring love and fame,
 Certain a place among the best to claim ;
 Heaven-high aspiring, thou did'st press thy race
 Upward, and would'st the universe embrace.
 Mental depression came thy life to cloud,
 And Melancholy wrapped thee in her shroud ;
 Never alas ! could'st thou appreciate more
 Nature's most beautiful and bounteous store.

E. P.

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